



Our Neighborhood by John Eldridge, President

Our Old Braeswood neighborhood is a community as well as a location. Together we strive to prevent crime, keep our parks and homes attractive and valuable, protect against commercial encroachment and hold some social events. Things are going well, thanks to the volunteer efforts of many neighbors and prior planning. Our streets are recently paved, the parks are upgraded, the Garden Club is active, numerous trees have been planted, crime is down and real estate values are solid. We are maintaining our historic and spacious character even as homes are upgraded and the Medical Center expands around us. But, please join in --- please attend meetings, send comments, join RACs and pay your membership dues! Participation counts when sustaining a great neighborhood. Thanks to all of our volunteer officers and committee members for making Old Braeswood what it is.

Neighborhood Meeting, Tues., April 17 @ 7 p.m.

All Old Braeswood residents are invited to attend our regular April meeting including an informative talk by Robert Searcy, a Realtor who works closely with HoustonMod. HoustonMod is an organization dedicated to preserving Houston’s architectural history, focusing on mid-century architecture. The ranch house design is an example. One function of HoustonMod is to bring together seller and buyer where a home of good mid-century design is being marketed. There are many good examples of mid-century design in Old Braeswood. Mr. Searcy will speak on the value and marketability of OB ranch houses. For more information visit <http://houstonmod.org>. Refreshments will be served. Everyone welcome.

Date: Tuesday, April 17, 2012
 Time: 7:00 p.m.
 Location: 2402 Maroneal Blvd., home of Dee & Bill Murray
 Hosted by: The Old Braeswood POA & Old Braeswood Garden Club

Crime on the rise in OB after eight month hiatus

2011 was one of the most crime-filled years on record for Old Braeswood. HPD crime statistics show 12 burglaries and 2 auto thefts between January 1 and December 31. Crime was most intense last summer. No burglaries were reported between October 1, 2011 and February 20, 2012. Since February 21st there have been three burglaries and one attempted burglary reported to HPD.

If you have been the victim of a crime, please be sure to report the crime to HPD, as this agency maintains crime statistics. Also, RACS Patrol does not notify us about crime, so please tell us if you have been a victim. This will allow us to work with our local HPD detectives to ensure neighborhood crime is being addressed. Residents have recently reported several suspicious persons at their doors and peering in their windows, plus a large number of magazine (scam) salesmen.

Crimes so far this year include the February 2nd robbery of Co-America Bank on Holcombe & Morningside and the following incidents:

Feb. 21 burglary - 2300 block of Blue Bonnet;
 March 8 burglary - 2500 block of Maroneal;
 March 10 burglary— Morningside; and
 an attempted burglary on the same date in the 2500 block of Bellefontaine.

Please be alert for suspicious activity and notify the RACS Patrol at 713-755-7628 if you see anything out of the ordinary.

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Ann Garnett (left) at the alternate Precinct 472 polling location, 2337 Gramercy Blvd. Joanne Brodsky (upper right) is pictured in front of her garage at 2347 Underwood, which is the current polling location.

Newcomers to Old Braeswood have a surprise awaiting them when it comes time to vote. Other people vote in public places like schools and grocery stores. We vote in our neighbors' garages. In fact, we vote in two specific garages, sometimes in Ann Garnett's garage at 2337 Gramercy Blvd. (the Republican garage), sometimes in Joanne Brodsky's garage at 2347 Underwood Blvd. (the Democratic garage). Why is that?

The answer requires some knowledge of how counties are divided politically. Each of the 254 counties in Texas is divided into election precincts. Each election precinct has an Election Precinct Chair for each of the two major political parties. In Old Braeswood, which is the 472 Precinct, Ann Garnett is the Republican Chair and Joanne Brodsky is the Democratic Chair. Their primary job as Precinct Chairs is to identify Party members living in the precinct and to encourage them to vote.

Ann assumed her duties in 2000, and Joanne has served since 1982. Each of them was qualified in three important ways. They had an interest in the political process. They were members of the Parties they wanted to represent. And each had a generously sized garage for conducting elections out of the rain.

An election precinct also has an Election Judge from each of the two major Parties. In our precinct, our two Precinct Chairs also serve as our two Election Judges. (Now we're honing in on why we switch between garages!) There is a periodic review of the voting pattern in each precinct to determine which Party's Election Judge will be the presiding Election Judge for the next General Election. The other Party's Election Judge becomes the alternate Election Judge. Currently, Joanne is

the presiding Judge and Ann is the alternate. We vote in the garage of the presiding Election Judge.

The night before the General Election, both Election Judges meet to set up the voting machines and tables. All the voting machines – the individual voting machines that we use to vote and the two machines that they feed our recorded votes into – are sealed before they are delivered to the OB garage. Early on Election Day, Ann and Joanne meet again to cut the seals on the machines and to open the polls. At the end of the day, they close the polls together. Then, they count all the signatures in the sign-in books and match that total to the total number of votes. The number of signatures must equal the number of votes.

Ann and Joanne each take away a tabulation of the number of votes received by each candidate (but not who cast those votes, it being a secret ballot!).

Ann presided over a General Election during her very first year as Election Judge. It was the year of George W. Bush's first Presidential run. She looked out early that morning and saw people lined up in her driveway and down the block, "many of them in scrubs, ready for work in the Med Center." They had to wait, because she wasn't allowed to open the polls until 7:00 am. The day was busy nonstop, unlike the day of a Primary, when there is time to chat with voters who pull up a chair and linger after casting their ballot. Ann found herself giving interviews in her driveway to the press and even to a television reporter. Polling in unusual places is a favorite media topic and an OB garage is an "unusual place."

Joanne recalls that she raised her children at the polls. She used to put two or three playpens on her driveway for her own young children and for those of the voters. "I'm a nurse, so I kept them clean." The playpens also came in handy during the Democratic Party precinct meetings in her driveway after the polls closed. "We discussed the important issues of the day while keeping an eye on the babies." (Not surprisingly, after their early exposure to politics, her three children each served as an intern in Washington D.C.)

Unlike the rancor and incivility that we witness in the media among politicians, there is no ill will between our OB political party representatives. Ann and Joanne share a warm friendship and enjoy working together.

[This is the 21st article in a continuing series on houses and people in Old Braeswood. Suggestions for future columns are welcome.]

Garden Club News & Yard of the Season!



Peggy & Martin Fischer's home at 2428 Bellefontaine is the 2012 Winter Yard of the Season.

The Old Braeswood Garden Club members voted on the Winter Yard of the Season and the winner is 2428 Bellefontaine, home of **Peggy & Martin Fischer**. Drive by and see the silver flamingo in the front yard, which marks the winning yard each quarter.

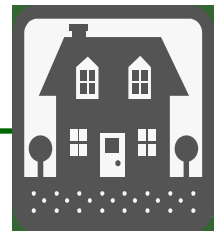
The Garden Club recently purchased and installed a dog waste station in the park and outfitted it with poop bags. Volunteers from the Garden Club oversee the maintenance of this station. We hope this will help keep our neighborhood clean. [Editor's note: Please be aware that many of our young children enjoy playing (and rolling) in the grassy area in the park, so if you are a dog owner, please encourage your pet to "go" outside the park for the health of our small children.]

If you are interested in joining the Garden Club, please contact Margo Elgohary 713-664-4630. All neighbors welcome!

Old Braeswood Real Estate Report

by Dawn Gervais, Realtor® Consultant

Happy Spring to all of you! As I predicted in my last report, 2012 is proving to be a good year for real estate, especially in our neighborhood. There is a great deal of remodeling and construction activity in Old Braeswood. Those who make the effort to preserve our classic and original homes deserve special kudos. And thanks to the neighborhood's strong deed restrictions Old Braeswood is able to maintain the integrity, character and charm that was originally envisioned by its founders. Isn't that what brought us



here in the first place?!

Current figures for 2012

# Homes for sale as of 3/20/12:	9
* Min. Asking Price	\$550,000
* Max. Asking Price ...	\$1,299,000
* Average Price per SF	\$245

Sales comparison: 2010—2011

Homes Sold in 2011.....	19
* Minimum Sold price	\$479,900
* Maximum Sold price	\$3,075,000
* Average Price per SF	\$228
* Average days on market	110

Homes Sold in 2010... ..	11
* Minimum Sold price	\$349,500
* Maximum Sold price	\$1,725,000
* Average Price per SF	\$223
* Average days on market	135

Tai Chi for Old Braeswood residents on Thursdays and Saturdays

Tai chi classes have started and newcomers are welcome at any time! There are two options: Thursday at 8:30 am or Saturday at 8:30 am. Both classes are given in the carport at 2322 Maroneal Blvd. with instruction by Old Braeswood resident Rose Pu.

Wear long, comfortable pants (no shorts), and comfortable shoes. Tai chi is best done on an empty stomach or at least an hour after eating. Classes last anywhere from about 45 minutes to one hour and are free.

All Old Braeswood residents are welcome. Questions:

[713 660-9520](tel:7136609520) or
RosePu2003@aol.com



New
WELCOME

Neighbors

**Maida Salgado
& Mike Williams**
2335 Dorrington

**Penelope Bonnen &
Marc El-Khoury**
2340 Bellefontaine Blvd

ECU Properties
2109 Maroneal Blvd.

Kathy Adamou
2526 Gramercy

**Sign up for
Old Braeswood
eBlasts & Crime Alerts**

Would you like to receive up to the minute news and crime alerts electronically? To subscribe, call the Old Braeswood office at 713-807-1787 or send your email address to info@OldBraeswood.com.

**Join Old Braeswood's
Yahoo Group**

This is a real time group where you can send messages to other members without delay. The Yahoo group has been very helpful for tracking down lost pets and has even been used to help the RACS Constables Patrol track down thieves. Please note that the Yahoo group is not related to the eNews and crime alert service. Visit this link to get started:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/OldBraeswoodNeighbors/>.

Old Braeswood Park Corp. News

The Old Braeswood Park Corp. is a 501c3 charitable organization whose mission is to oversee the maintenance and to make improvements to Old Braeswood's parks and esplanades. Contributions to the Park Corp. are fully tax-deductible.

In January the Park Corp. held its annual meeting and elected new officers. Annette Eldridge was elected president, replacing outgoing president Matthew Kelley. David Leathers was elected Treasurer, replacing Liz Alhand. Special thanks to both Matthew and Liz for their service. Other Park Corp. board members include: Joann Mattheisen, Kathy Lord, Christine Robins and Bob Birenbaum.

A solicitation for contributions for ongoing park maintenance will be mailed in May. Please watch your mail boxes and consider making a tax-deductible contribution. If you'd like to make a donation now, please send your check, in any amount, payable to Old Braeswood Park Corp., PO Box 541346, Houston, TX 77254

The Park Corp. board wishes to thank the Garden Club members who regularly dedicate their time to oversee the maintenance of Katy's Corner across from the Park. Thanks also to the Garden Club for their generous donation of the dog station and for the supply of waste bags.

The bi-annual park toy clearing will take place the second weekend in April. Riding toys will be assessed and those that are no longer serviceable will be removed. If you have left toys at the park that you wish to keep, please collect them by the first weekend in April.

The Park Corp welcomes your suggests for improving the park. Please contact Annette Eldridge at eldridgefamille@comcast.net.

Recycling & Trash Schedule



Household Trash Yard Waste	Tuesdays Tuesdays
Tree & Limb Debris Junk Waste	1st Monday (odd months) 1st Monday (even months)
Recycling	Every other Tuesday Mar. 13 & 27 Apr. 10 & 24 May 8 & 22 June 5 & 19

In accordance with Chapter 39 of the City's Code of Ordinances, trash may not be set on the curb for collection before 6 p.m. of the day preceding pick up. Please remind your yard service not to leave bags on the curb during the week. Please also remind crews not to blow leaves or other debris into the storm sewers, as this clogs the system and creates the perfect conditions for mosquitoes—and is against the law. For more trash rules, visit www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste.

New Neighbor Coffee, Sat. March 31, 9 a.m.

All neighbors are invited to attend and meet new neighbors who have moved here since the last coffee in 2011. Come as you are casual! The coffee will be held at 2322 Maroneal and is hosted by Dawn Gervais, G.G. Hsieh, and neighborhood friends. For info phone 713 -660-9520 or email gghsieh@gmail.com .No need to RSVP.



Roberts Elementary Hosts Spring Community Night, Sat. March 31 at 6 p.m.

Please join us as we celebrate our 75th anniversary. School Open House with tours from 6 - 7 p.m. Join us for Cookies & Lemonade on the Front Lawn and free Nachos & Popcorn at 7 p.m. on the Outdoor Stage; Additional food available for purchase. Free showing of *The Wizard of Oz* at 7:45 p.m. on the Soccer Field.

Welcome Quinn Leslie Dutt!



Aliza & Bryan Dutt on Glen Haven announce the birth of their third child, Quinn Leslie Dutt.

We hear that siblings Finn and Addie are thrilled with their new baby brother.

(Editor's note: He certainly is a cutie!)

Walking for Security

When neighbors walk in the neighborhood, it not only provides exercise for them, it also provides a good security patrol for all of us. That kind of security is cheap — so cheap it's free! Well, almost free. Walking the neighborhood requires accessible sidewalks, free of mud and overhanging foliage. To encourage our neighborhood walkers, please keep foliage trimmed away from the sidewalk and sidewalks clean. In places where mud is a chronic problem, consider installing metal or plastic edging between your yard and the sidewalk to keep topsoil in place.

Be sure to bring your cell phone on walks with you and don't hesitate to use the camera feature to capture photos of suspicious vehicles and activity. Please also program the RACS number into your cell phone. It's 713-755-7628.

Southampton
Home & Garden Tour
12 – 4 p.m.
Sunday
March 25th

Homes include 1115 Berthea
2011 Dunstan, 1611 South Blvd.
1802 Albans, 2001 Wroxton
& 1771 Sunset Blvd.

This annual fundraising event is great fun and of special interest to preservation minded neighbors.

All proceeds benefit the
Sunset Blvd. Esplanade Fund

2012 OBPOA Officers & Chairpersons

President	John Eldridge
1 st Vice Pres.	Susan Teich
2 nd Vice Pres.	Buddy Steves
3 rd Vice Pres.	Ryan Maierson
At-Large	Molly Khalil
At-Large	G.G. Hsieh
Treasurer	David Leathers
Secretary	Dawn Gervais
Past President	Dee Murray
Architectural Review	Marilyn Archer Matthew Kelley Prince Ambooken
Block Captains	Sally Miller
Historic	Susan Teich
Newsletter	<u>Volunteer Needed</u>
Park	Annette Eldridge
Enforcement	Sam Bernstein John Eldridge Bill Marchbank
RACS Rep	Ryan Maierson
Rice U Liaison	Bob Birenbaum
Social	G.G. Hsieh
Trees	Carroll Shaddock & Molly Khalil
University Place	Kathy Lord
Welcome	Dawn Gervais

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